

Dear Participant,

I am happy that you are interested in improving your skills in chinoiserie painting. I hope that you are enjoying the class as much as I have enjoyed sharing and teaching decorative painting and trompe-l'œil over the last 20 years in my own school in Versailles, France.

Chinoiserie - 18th Century Chinese Scenery

Introduction:

An extraordinary interest in the Far East developed throughout the 17th and 18th centuries. Jean-Baptiste Colbert (Prime Minister of Louis XIV) contributed to it in an essential way with



Jean Pillement

the creation of the East India Company. The cities and trades which it drew from, among which names – Canton, Pondicherry and Chandernagor – still bring to mind this prestigious past, were the moving parts of a prosperous business: Ships, loaded to their upper decks, brought back to France precious silks, china and lacquers, spices, and famous fabrics of printed cotton known as "Indians".

The craze for objects coming from these areas, still unknown by most of the world, did not stop growing until the end of the 18th century: The western imagination had developed a certain taste for the "Chinese sceneries". Painters such as Jean Pillement, Christophe Huet, François Boucher and Antoine Watteau were the main interpreters of life in these distant places, as seen under an idyllic angle: Everything was luxurious, peaceful and a sensual delight in the scenes these painters left us...



François Boucher



Colors

Titanium white, Prussian blue, Raw umber, Burnt umber, Raw Sienna, Red oxide

I prefer Golden Paint colors for their high quality. Because decorative painting must last a long time, it is very important to choose paints that are durable.

Tools

4" spalter, flat-bristled brushes, sharp stripping brush, stripping ruler, badger, 6H pencil, eraser, rag.

Panel / substrate: polyester canvas primed with a white gesso.

Stages

1 – Apply the perforated tracing paper on the board and gently dab the lines of the pattern with a pounce bag filled with newspaper ashes.

2 – Draw the pattern with a 6H pencil.

3 – Dust off the excess pounce with a rag.

4 – Apply on the whole surface a very transparent glaze made with burnt umber and a drop of Prussian blue. Use a 4" spalter.

This color is the local tone or the "chromatic link". Let dry.

5 – Paint a darker value on the bottom of the panel with the same colors to "hold" the composition; let dry.

6 – Apply on the whole surface except the bottom of the panel a velature (veil) made from titanium white, Prussian blue and raw umber.

This must be a transparent application. Save this color carefully.

7 – Paint the darker lines – which are the shadow accents – with Prussian blue and raw umber. Use a fine synthetic brush. Let dry.

This step structures the work. In terms of the job, we say that it "builds the work" because it will already give you an idea of what the composition will be.

8 – Paint the half tones with the velature color used in #6.

This color has to overlap a bit with the shadow accent painted in stage 7.

Use a synthetic brush. Let dry.

9 – Paint the reflected lights with titanium white and Prussian blue.

Use a small flat-bristle brush to paint using the "dry brush" technique. Let dry.

10 – Paint the lights with titanium white mixed with Red oxide and Raw Sienna (should be 90% white). Dilute the mixture with a few drops of water.

Use a synthetic brush for small areas and a flat-bristled brush for the larger areas.

11 - Paint the highlighted accents with an opaque tone created with the same colors as in #10, but with more white. Use a small synthetic brush; let dry.

12 – Apply a matte varnish for protection. Use a 2" bristle brush or synthetic spalter.

Important: Always remember to preserve the local tone (#4) between shadow and light. The darkest values are in the front plane of the scenery; the lightest are in the distant plane.



If you are interested in further information about becoming a professional decorative painter or in taking some workshops to improve your skills also in trompe-l'œil technique in the heart of Versailles, we offer the following

Full program, 6 months:

<https://english.ecolejeansable.com/2024-2025-calendar-of-the-professional-certified-cursus/>

Short classes 2024 – 2025

<https://english.ecolejeansable.com/short-courses/>

Summer Master classes in the European Palaces; for updates, please send me your email address.

JUNE 2025 Master-Class « L'Art du Mezzo-Fresco » Palazzo GANGI – PALERMO, Italy

I am happy to assist you; please contact me at:

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